

Mr. MCCAIN. I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I amend the unanimous consent request which stated there would be 20 minutes for closing remarks, equally divided, just prior to the vote. I amend that to say, 20 minutes for closing remarks, equally divided, plus an additional 10 minutes for Senator MCCAIN and 10 minutes for Senator FEINGOLD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object, let me just say that there are 19 nominations still pending on the calendar if we are able to adopt this unanimous consent request today. Some of those nominations have been on the calendar for well over a year. I think it is the view of virtually every member of the caucus on our side that to hold nominations that long is cruel. It is wrong. It should not be tolerated. We are in a position to clear all nominations, including those 19.

I ask whether the majority leader might be able to clear those as well?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I will respond. I know that at least one appointment is waiting on a companion appointment from the administration, where you have a Democratic nominee for a commission or a board, and we usually try to move them together. That is one case. Then we have seven IRS members who can be cleared if—I understand there is opposition to at least one of those from the Democratic side.

But my goal in working to get this large package done is so we can continue to work to get companion nominations and move more nominations. I discussed this with Senator DASCHLE yesterday. It is not easy, but we hope to continue to work together to get the nominations in a position where they can be cleared, or where we have debate time and a vote and arrange for that to occur. We will keep working on it. It has been reduced by some 70 or more nominations if this entire package is completed, and if all of them—well, it will either be voted on and approved or defeated, leaving only 19. So that is a major step toward getting nominations confirmed.

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object, and I will not, obviously, I hope the majority leader will work with us to work through these 19

names. As I say, some of them have put their lives on hold now for over a year. It is just intolerable to them, and it should be intolerable to us that we would accept that kind of a practice. I will work with the majority leader and, hopefully, resolve these outstanding problems. I will not object to this request.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I simply thank both the leaders for their patience in working out this very difficult agreement. I appreciate the majority leader extending us time prior to the vote to summarize our arguments.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, are we now in morning business?

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. GREGG. Mr. PRESIDENT, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 5 minutes without having that time come off of the time allocated to the Senator from Minnesota, who, I understand, has time reserved during this period of morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has time until 10 o'clock. The Senator from Minnesota has time until 10 o'clock.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 5 minutes and that his time be extended to reflect the time that I will take.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There are sequential times after that. The Senator from Wyoming has until 10:30, and the Senator from Illinois has until 11:30.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent that my 5 minutes come off of the time of the Senator from Wyoming.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SIERRA LEONE

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I wanted to speak about Sierra Leone and especially about the attempts I have made to address this issue as chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary.

The New York Times and a number of other daily papers have reported

that I have limited the ability of the State Department to spend money on behalf of the United Nations, or send money to the U.N. for the purpose of peacekeeping in Sierra Leone, and that is correct. However, the numbers that the New York Times, at least, used were incorrect.

I think the record needs to be corrected. I presume this story came from a momentum within the U.N. to try to put pressure on the Congress to spend money on U.N. initiatives. Obviously, the U.N. feels that by using our media sources in this country, they can influence the activity of the Congress, specifically of the Senate. However, I would have hoped that the New York Times reporter would have reviewed the actual facts and determined the facts before reporting them as facts. Obviously, this reporter got his information from somebody, I presume, at the U.N., or maybe the State Department, and did not bother to check the facts.

It was represented in the story, for example, that the amount of money that was owed to the U.N. in the area of peacekeeping was somewhere in the vicinity of \$1.7 billion. This number is inaccurate and the story was, therefore, inaccurate.

Let me review the numbers specifically. In accounting for the amount of money that the U.N. is owed, there is a regular budget assessment of approximately \$300 million. This is included in the \$1.7 billion, which I presume they got from the U.N., or they could not have gotten to that number. However, that \$300 million is not owed. We paid that money on a 9-month delay. We have always paid it on a 9-month delay because of the budgeting process of the Federal Government. So you can reduce that number by the \$300 million figure because that money will be paid on October 1, as it always is.

Second, the Times must have been counting as a U.N. assessment the peacekeeping moneys of \$500 million. Well, the \$500 million is the amount we have allocated for peacekeeping in our budgets for the benefit of the U.N. But that \$500 million has not yet been called upon by the U.N. In fact, of that \$500 million, we have received requests for approximately \$300 million. We have not received requests for the full \$500 million. We have received requests for about \$300 million. We have paid—of that \$300 million requested—approximately \$55 million. The balance is in issue, but it is being worked out. So that number is inaccurate, and you can reduce that \$1.7 billion by at least \$200 million that we have not received a request for, and the \$55 million we have paid and, in my opinion, by significant other numbers also.

Third, the Times must have been counting the \$926 million which is an arrearage payment. The arrearage issue was settled last year. It had been